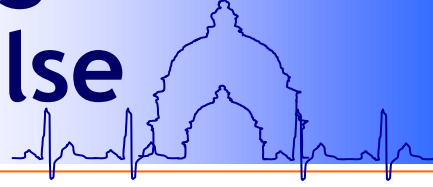




7-2-2009

# Legislative Pulse



## KHPA News and Events

**New Clearing-house Contractor:**  
On June 23, KHPA announced a new contract with Policy Studies, Inc. (PSI) to manage and operate the clearinghouse. That unit processes new applications for Medicaid and SCHIP coverage. PSI will take over clearinghouse operations in January 2010.

**Legislative Session At-A-Glance:** A summary of all the issues, bills and budget items affecting KHPA during the 2009 session is now available on the KHPA website. Click [here](#) to read the report.

## Governor's Budget Cuts Protect Medicaid, SCHIP Services

KHPA Executive Director Dr. Andrew Allison assured Kansans this week that health care services provided through Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program will continue, and there will be no reduction in services or provider reimbursements as a result of new budget cuts announced by the governor.

"The actions by the governor were reasonable and prudent, given the state's financial condition," Allison said. "More than 300,000 people in Kansas rely on Medicaid and SCHIP for their health coverage. They will not experience any reduction in service, and the medical providers who care for them will not see any reduction in payments."

On Thursday, July 2, Gov. Mark Parkinson announced spending cuts totaling \$90.6 million from the state general fund, along with \$69 million in new revenues. Those actions were intended to offset lower-than-expected revenues and to balance the state budget for Fiscal Year 2010.

The actions that affect KHPA include:

- Replacing \$6.3 million of state general fund money in the Medicaid caseload account with new federal stimulus funds Kansas will receive this year due to the state's rising unemployment rate.
- Recapturing \$5.3 million from the caseload account that had been carried over from Fiscal Year 2009.
- Deleting \$500,000 from the agency's caseload account that was intended to expand HealthWave eligibility for pregnant women and provide them with an enhanced dental benefit. KHPA had already announced the expansion and new benefit could not be implemented because no administrative funds were provided for the program.

In a statement issued Thursday, Gov. Parkinson said: "My plan is a responsible reaction to the current struggles we face. It makes the best effort to protect public safety, disabled Kansans and other critical services, and it does not include an across-the-board cut to state employee salaries or furloughs."

During the 2009 legislative session, Kansas lawmakers passed a budget that protected Medicaid and SCHIP caseloads. But it cut 15.5 percent from KHPA's administrative budget, which resulted in the elimination of 14 staff positions and a substantial reduction in KHPA's contract for customer and provider services.

**NEW:** “F as in Fat” is a state-by-state analysis of obesity in the United States by the Trust for America’s Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. [Download it here.](#)

## Save the Date

**KHPA Board Meeting**  
Date: Aug. 18, 2009  
Time: 8:30 a.m.—3:30 p.m.  
Location: TBD

**KHPA Data Consortium Meeting**  
Date: Aug. 3, 2009  
Time: 1—4 p.m.  
Location: Landon State Office Bldg., 900 SW Jackson, Conf. Room 106, Topeka.

**Legislative Coordinating Council:**  
Date: July 6, 2009  
Time: 10 a.m.  
Location: Room 545-N, Statehouse

Happy  
Independence  
Day  
July 4, 2009

## Board Appoints Allison as Executive Director

The Kansas Health Policy Authority Board voted June 17 to appoint Dr. Andrew Allison, PhD, as the new executive director of the agency, subject to confirmation by the Kansas Senate.

Allison succeeds Marcia Nielsen who announced in May that she was resigning to accept a faculty and administrative position at the University of Kansas Medical Center, where she had worked previously.



Allison had been Deputy Director at KHPA since December 2007, and had also served as the state Medicaid Director since November 2006

“We feel very fortunate to have Dr. Allison leading the agency during this time of transition,” said KHPA Board Chairman Joe Tilghman. “He brings a tremendous amount of knowledge and experience to the job. As Medicaid Director over the last few years, he’s also demonstrated his ability to manage a very large and complex program, and to really transform it in ways that make it more efficient and more accountable.”

KHPA also announced the following additional management changes:

- Doug Farmer, director of the State Employee Health Benefits Plan, now also serves as Deputy Director and will supervise communications and legislative activities.
- Dr. Barbara Langner, who formerly directed the agency’s Policy Division, has been named Acting Medicaid Director.
- Scott Brunner, KHPA Chief Financial Officer, takes on the additional role of supervising human resources and legal services.

## Advisory Councils to Resume Activities in Fall

The KHPA At-Large, Consumer, Provider and Purchaser Advisory Council meetings that had been scheduled for June and July will be rescheduled for later this fall. KHPA Executive Director Dr. Andrew Allison explained that due to budget cuts, efforts are underway to make greater use of teleconferencing and other technologies to reduce the cost of the council meetings. More details will be provided as they become available.

KHPA Pulse is a publication by the KHPA Communications Team distributed weekly during the legislative session. If you have questions or comments, contact the Public Information Officer Peter Hancock at 785/296.5603 or [peter.hancock@khpas.gov](mailto:peter.hancock@khpas.gov)